

01/13/2016

Updated Victim Impact Statement

Aside from the horrible truth that my daughter was horrifically abused from the ages of four to seven and her innocence was literally stolen, one of the ongoing concerns that plagues my child is that literally any person she meets on the street (or any teenage boy in her class) might have seen photos of her being cruelly debased and abused. These images have taken on a life of their own as they are passed from pedophile to pedophile. Thousands of people have been arrested with her photos in their possession. My daughter fears that people will recognize her from the photographs and will find out where she lives and come harm her or her family. My daughter is an intelligent child and she knows that these men are pleasuring themselves sexually while looking at her picture. It has created a lot of anxiety, damage to her self-esteem, and irrational fears that will require a lifetime of support/counseling to manage.

In her mind, every man she sees is a potential threat (not just her original abuser). Imagine being in fear of every single person you meet. Imagine that a boy asks you to go to the middle school dance. Is he just dating you because he has seen your photos and wants to sexually assault you? Many of her peers are quite vocal about viewing pornography on their computers. She worries that one of them will see her photos. In the past, it was easier to quiet her fears, but now she realizes that the Internet can be used to 'find anyone, anywhere'. Always lurking in the background of her mind, is the possibility that she will be identified or attacked by a pedophile who has become obsessed with her pictures.

All of her friends have social media accounts, such as Facebook or other sites, where they post 'selfies'. But my child lives in fear of posting her image on the Internet, being recognized by a pedophile who has seen her photos, and being in danger. She loses friends because they cannot understand why she doesn't want to participate in these 'normal' activities. She is ostracized. She feels alone.

The embarrassment and mental anguish of knowing that those debasing photos are still in circulation is ongoing. I urge the courts to send a clear message that trading these images is not a 'victimless' crime. It is an unending violation of her innocence and allows her to be abused over and over again by new perpetrators.

With deepest sincerity,

Mother of the Victim

‘AprilBlond’ Victim Impact Statement/November 2020

Being a teenager is hard no matter what. But because I had to live with a messed up person who abused me and put my abuse on the internet, my life will always be more challenging. I want to be a normal teenager and it makes me feel angry and violated that I can’t.

I have to feel afraid to have a social media profile picture of myself due to fears of being recognized. I am afraid that pedophiles who look at the images of my abuse could try to find me and hurt me or my family. As a victim, it is my right to be notified each time an image of my abuse is viewed. My mom received 22,000 notifications and I had to stop the notifications because it made me have panic attacks. It also makes me feel weird, uncomfortable, anxious, and sad. It’s hard to imagine 22,000 people have seen or shared images of my abuse. It makes me sick to think about how many people there are in the world who don’t care they are supporting child abuse.

It is difficult to trust people because I wonder if they have seen the images of my child abuse and are a pedophile. I get nervous when a person looks at me too long or just more than a passing glance. I wonder if they are putting together who I am from an image they saw on the internet. I feel scared, anxious, and angry I could be abused again if a person recognizes me who saw the images of my abuse. I have had to go to therapy to learn to talk about what happened. I might have to continue going for the rest of my life because the images will always be there. It’s hard to trust people and when I’m older and want to get married it might be hard to feel close to someone. I hope to have children when I’m an adult. I know I will be very over protective, paranoid, and struggle to let them be independent because I fear they will be abused. Instead of those years happy, they could be really hard for me and I might have to get help to deal with those feelings.

As a child I didn’t have a choice what happened to me. Now, I have to suffer twice; the first time was being abused and the second time is the ongoing anxiety due to the images of my abuse forever accessible. It’s impossible to cope with and accept that I have to live with the images of my abuse being available on the internet indefinitely. These images will live on the internet longer than I will live. It’s very possible I could have to go to therapy for the rest of my life because of this. If the feelings get too bad, I could have to take medication to help.

I can’t get support from my close friends and family about my feelings because I’m paranoid and anxious that if I tell them, they will go to the internet and try to find and look at the images. It feels like nobody knows how I feel. A coping skill is supposed to make a person feel better. It’s hard to feel better about knowing I can’t do anything about the images of my abuse being put on the internet and people using those images.